

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following two processes:

- a) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less; and
- b) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between punches in a die.

Claim 14 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following three processes:

- a) a carbon nanotube heat treatment process of heating carbon nanotubes by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the carbon nanotubes between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less;
- b) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less, wherein the long-chain carbon nanotubes having been subjected to said heat treatment; and
- c) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 15 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following four processes:

- a) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less;
- b) a dispersing process of adding a dispersing agent to the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process to wet-disperse the knead-dispersed material;
- c) a drying process of drying the wet-dispersed knead-dispersed material; and
- d) a sintering process of sintering the dried knead-dispersed material by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between punches in a die.

Claim 16 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following five processes:

- a) a carbon nanotube heat treatment process of heating carbon nanotubes by discharge plasma by allowing direct current pulse current to flow while clamping the carbon nanotubes between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less;
- b) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less, the long-chain carbon nanotubes having been subjected to said heat treatment;
- c) a dispersing process of adding a dispersing agent to the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process to wet-disperse the knead-dispersed material;
- d) a drying process of drying the wet-dispersed knead-dispersed material; and

e) a sintering process of sintering the dried knead-dispersed material by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 17 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following three processes:

a) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less;

b) a knead-dispersed material heat treatment process of heating the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process by discharge plasma without sintering by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the knead-dispersed material between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less; and

c) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material which have been subjected to said heat treatment by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 18 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following four processes:

a) a carbon nanotube heat treatment process of heating carbon nanotubes by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the carbon nanotubes between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less;

b) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon

nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less, the long-chain carbon nanotubes having been subjected to said heat treatment;

c) a knead-dispersed material heat treatment process of heating the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process by discharge plasma without sintering by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less; and

d) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material which has been subjected to said heat treatment by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 19 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following five processes:

a) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing (i) a ceramics powder or a metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and (ii) long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less;

b) a dispersing process of adding a dispersing agent to the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process to wet-disperse the knead-dispersed material;

c) a drying process of drying the wet-dispersed knead-dispersed material;

d) a knead-dispersed material heat treatment process of heating the dried knead-dispersed material by discharge plasma without sintering by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the knead-dispersed material between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less; and

e) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material which has been subjected to said heat treatment by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 20 (New): A method of producing a carbon nanotube dispersed composite material comprising the following six processes:

- a) a carbon nanotube heat treatment process of heating carbon nanotubes by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the carbon nanotubes between punches in a die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less;
- b) a mixing process of kneading and dispersing a ceramics powder or metal (including its alloy) powder or a mixture of both said powders and long-chain carbon nanotubes in an amount of 10 wt% or less, the long-chain carbon nanotubes having been subjected to said heat treatment;
- c) a dispersing process of adding a dispersing agent to the knead-dispersed material obtained by said mixing process to wet-disperse the knead-dispersed material;
- d) a drying process of drying the wet-dispersed knead-dispersed material;
- e) a knead-dispersed material heat treatment process of heating the dried knead-dispersed material by discharge plasma without sintering by allowing pulse current to flow while clamping the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die with a pressure of 10 MPa or less; and
- f) a sintering process of sintering the knead-dispersed material which has been subjected to said heat treatment by discharge plasma by allowing pulse current to flow while pressing the knead-dispersed material between the punches in the die.

Claim 21 (New): The method according to Claim 13, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 22 (New): The method according to Claim 14, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 23 (New): The method according to Claim 15, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 24 (New): The method according to Claim 16, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 25 (New): The method according to Claim 17, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 26 (New): The method according to Claim 18, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 27 (New): The method according to Claim 19, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 28 (New): The method according to Claim 20, wherein the ceramics powder has an average particle size of 10 μm or less and the metal powder has an average particle size of 200 μm or less.

Claim 29 (New): The method according to Claim 13, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 30 (New): The method according to Claim 14, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 31 (New): The method according to Claim 15, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 32 (New): The method according to Claim 16, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 33 (New): The method according to Claim 17, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 34 (New): The method according to Claim 18, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 35 (New): The method according to Claim 19, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 36 (New): The method according to Claim 20, wherein the ceramics powder is composed of one or more of alumina, zirconia, aluminum nitride, and silicon carbide.

Claim 37 (New): The method according to Claim 13, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 38 (New): The method according to Claim 14, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 39 (New): The method according to Claim 15, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 40 (New): The method according to Claim 16, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 41 (New): The method according to Claim 17, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 42 (New): The method according to Claim 18, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 43 (New): The method according to Claim 19, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.

Claim 44 (New): The method according to Claim 20, wherein the metal powder is composed of one or more of pure aluminum, aluminum alloy, titanium, titanium alloy, copper, copper alloy, and stainless steel.